

10 Keys to a Career in Law Enforcement

- 1. Get physically fit—and stay fit.**

Law enforcement careers can be very physically demanding. Keeping your body in shape can help you to stay safe—and better ensure the safety of others.
- 2. Be a safe and responsible driver.**

Law enforcement agencies review the driving history of applicants, including the number of tickets, accidents, license suspensions, and failure to carry insurance.
- 3. Pay your debts.**

The hiring process includes a credit check. If you fail to pay your bills or use credit wisely, it will reflect negatively on your level of responsibility.
- 4. Build your writing skills.**

Writing is a basic skill in law enforcement careers—you are what you write. The reports that you write will exist long after the events you record.
- 5. Protect your reputation at work.**

Having a positive work history is important. A background check will include contacting your previous employers. No matter what jobs you have, be sure your employers remember you as a good employee. Avoid behaviors that might put your reliability into question, such as quitting multiple jobs in a short period of time. Avoid being terminated from any job.
- 6. Follow the path of honesty throughout your life.**

Honesty is at the heart of law enforcement careers. Lying, cheating, or stealing eliminates many candidates from consideration for a job.
- 7. Pursue opportunities to strengthen your self-esteem.**

Successful careers in law enforcement involve being confident, assertive, outgoing, and able to interact with all kinds of people. These are qualities that you can build in yourself.
- 8. Do not use illegal drugs. If you do, stop now.**

Drug use can disqualify you from a career in law enforcement.
- 9. Be aware of the damaging potential of alcohol use and abuse.**

Alcohol abuse can also result in domestic violence, fights, DUI, and poor health. Each of these results can also disqualify you from a career in law enforcement.
- 10. Stay true to your values.**

Your duty in law enforcement is to protect and to serve others. Living according to a strong set of values will help you to carry out this duty every day. Peer pressure to act against your values can be strong—keep your values in mind if you are put to the test!



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